

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please substitute the following paragraph(s) for the abstract now appearing in the currently filed specification:

A single-pole, wavelength selective switch in which the input optical signal is converted to a light beam having a defined polarization, such as S-polarization, with respect to the system plane. The beam is laterally expanded in the system plane, and then spatially dispersed in the same plane as that of the beam expansion, preferably by means of a diffraction grating. The light is directed through a polarization conversion device, preferably a liquid crystal cell, pixelated along the wavelength dispersive direction such that each pixel operates on a separate wavelength. When the appropriate control voltage is applied to a pixel, the polarization of the light signal passing through that pixel is rotated, such as from S to P. The wavelength dispersed beams from the pixels are recombined, and are passed towards another polarizer at the switch output, aligned such that only the selected polarization components are allowed to exit.